

CCSD Teacher Adventures at Zzyzx
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Zzyzx Road, who would have thought this area would become the blue print for Mars exploration☺ We, teachers, were invited to join NASA scientists in their research of the Mojave Desert and its relationship to Mars. The project is soil analogs between Earth and Mars, but the theme is community. Scientists and teachers are sleeping together, eating together, researching together, and collaborating together to pave the path future Mars missions.



Day 1: We spent eight hours in the field looking at 1.6 Billion year old algae fossils (stromatolites) , Cyanobacteria (bacteria living under rocks in extreme environments), exploring lava tube caves, and analyzing the formation of local sand dunes.



Day 2 and 3: We spent our days in the laboratory counting viable bacteria that were collected from the field and then extracting the DNA from those samples. It was amazing how sterile our human hands treated the samples and how many times we cleaned dirt 😊

Every night scientists and teachers come together for dinner and a sharing of their daily experience. Our favorite part of this experience is listening to these brilliant scientists collaborate and build their own research projects by learning from their colleagues research and their ability and wiliness to share at a level that us teachers can understand.

